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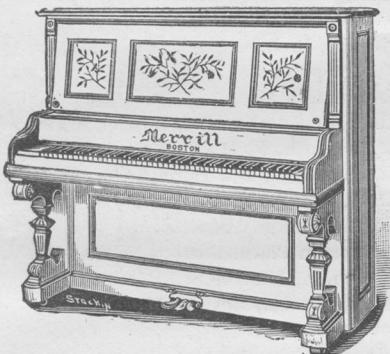
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VOL. LVII.

BOSTON, JUNE, 1895.

No. 6.

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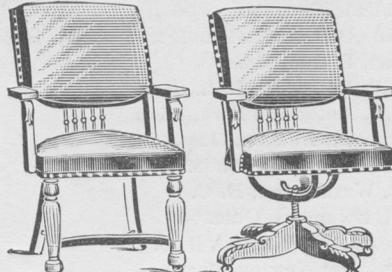
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THE ARENA MAGAZINE



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BOSTON, JUNE, 1895.

No. 6.

THE AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY,
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THE NEUTRALIZATION OF HAWAII.

BY EDWARD ATKINSON.

Address made at the annual public meeting of the American Peace Society, May 16, 1895.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Peace Society:

Somewhat to my own surprise I have found myself called upon to join your Society. I have been asked to speak upon a subject which has impressed my imagination and which I have endeavored to put before the authorities of the land, namely, the possibility of making the Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands the sanctuary of the great commerce of the Pacific Ocean in which "God's Peace" may be kept as it was in the sanctuaries of old time. Is it not possible that there may be one little spot in the great waste of waters where "the ships that pass from this land to that, weaving the web of concord among the nations," shall find a harbor of refuge where no danger may await them from the land and where no hostile shot shall be fired upon the seas which belong to this domain?

I believe that the general impression about what I may now call our Society is an erroneous one. I do not understand that in joining any one declares himself to be a non-resistant or even a non-combatant. I do not conceive that you deny the need of honor and of highest praise to all those who laid down their lives or sacrificed their property or their health in the active war by which the continuous but passive war of slavery was ended. On the other hand, I know that there are none among you whose "American Ideal" — to quote a title from a recent magazine — is so low as to put the conduct of war on a higher plane than the conduct of peace. I do not myself believe that the true American Ideal is so limited, so narrow, so unconsciously childish, as to put the motive of civil service and civil life below that of military service; how it can happen that a student and an observer also, of high executive talent, should so utterly fail in the want of appreciation of the very object of his own best work is beyond my own comprehension.

The American Ideal is the highest, — it aims at peace, good-will and plenty. The true American holds that the only incentive to or justification of any war on our part is that we may conquer disorder and wrong and by so doing establish peace, order and industry, to the end that in the great commerce among men and nations each may serve the other's need.

We may admit that it is necessary for us to construct and maintain a navy in order to be able to right the wrongs of our citizens even by force, when they are oppressed by the barbarous or by the semi-civilized nations and States that are under the curse of militarism or are still governed by military caste. Yet we need not degrade our navy by calling our vessels "commerce destroyers" when their true function is that of commerce protectors.

Again, when it is desirable to know the origin of one of the most striking incidents in the history of this country, making for peace and for a closer union with our mother country, one would naturally turn to the men who occupy the highest national positions in the service of the State, especially to one who assumes the position of "the scholar in politics," but when one turns to the senior Senator of Massachusetts for a reply to any question upon the subject which I am about to place before you, he might only be told that under the Reciprocity Treaty with Canada, which so fortunately existed during the whole period of